

THE WASHINGTON UNION.

METROPOLITAN MUSINGS.

Man and his Moods forms a problem which puzzles very profound minds. How little we know of what we see in ourselves best acquainted with—self. I mean this observation to apply less in a moral than a metaphysical sense; it is not the physical, but the psychical self to which I allude—a small etymological distinction involving a great difference. It has always seemed to me that what we call gravitation, and generalize out of the domain of speculation by the generic term law, is, in every instance of its manifestation, a specific application of a supersensible and intelligent force. When, for illustration, I see a sparkling brook rushing joyfully forward towards the ocean, leaping and foaming over rocks, and winding through the meadows, I always conceive of some *esence* whose vigor is momentarily and directly applied to that individual stream. But I am particularly impressed with this conviction by observing its evidence in the moods of men. All men are not at all times the same mood. Even *Funch*, which is the aggregate of several very witty and brilliant men, is sometimes very querulous and peevish. Judging from my own experience, I should say that there is something in the human, a mighty tidal wave of thought, which at times comes rushing on, filling the reservoirs of human intellect, and then recedes, leaving only the black and unshining mud and weeds, through which, like a silver thread, runs the narrow stream of our common thought.

However this fancy may be regarded by more sensible persons, one thing I am certain of, and that is, whether it is to be attributed to basiness or law, there are certain seasons when my brain seems to be composed of that most unstable and useless stuff, wet blotting paper. Nothing at such times makes a permanent impression upon it, and the thoughts it ought to convey intelligently are written in a miserable confusion of cross lines and reversed words.

Early in the past week, the two incompatible conditions of a demand for an incredible number of columns of copy, and a mental *dolor* for *neat* (which, being interpreted, means "don't save a—ninepence") caused me to seek relief to throw down my pen in despair, and to seek relief

to subscribe myself your suffering.

MIDDLE-AGED MAN.

TYPES.

BY W. D. BAILEY.

Has thou boldly mingled in battle fray,
Where lance and falchion blazed?
Has thou mark'd them who cleave her way;
And when they smote thee, smote i' th' face?

Then thou seen a type of this mortal life,
With his woes, in struggle, to care, and strife.

Has thou stood alone by the desolate hearth,
Where erst the wail-soul contended?

Then thou seen a type of the time to come,
When all that live shall for aye be dumb,

Has thou wandered at eve, in boughful mood,
And mark'd the sun's decline?

And deemed that he sank in the western flood;

When to thine he ceased to shine?

Then hast seen a type of thine own decay—
A type of thine last earthly day.

Has thou watched the beauty of Bayou's height,
And envied the soft, formative air?

And desired his first faint gleam of light
Announced the morning's birth?

Rejoice! 'twas a type of the opening tomb,
And of thy realm from its worms and gloom.

[From the Journal of Commerce.]

LAW, GEORGE.

BY ISAAC McMICHAEL.

It sleeps in beauty—like a gem
Dropped in a fairy frost;

As though the strand were green,
In some enchanted spot.

It sleeps in beauty, all undismayed,
Save when some cloud of air,

Sailing above it, shuns the view
Of the bright sun's noonday beam.

It sleeps in beauty, when the passing breeze
Dimples the crystal lake,

Or when the sun's bright rays find
The water's surface like a real

The still—soft surface of a mirror,
So still—that source its ripples kiss

The yellow sun that paves its strand,
Sinks when their creaming edge

Is lost in the deep, dark, blue land,

Nature's enchantress, in the air,

Her magic wand waves to and fro,
To drown the slumber steeples the woods,

The skies above and leaves below.

Here she lies, like a child at dawn,
Purified by effusion of the land,

The land, undismayed waves,

From year to year, spring's rosy morn

Has given to her, from her own groves

With blossoms red and white.

And here for ages, ere the bark

Of the pale faces crev'd the brane,

Long are the plumb that trod the rocks

Or Plymouth, with their load of pine;

Long are the hills, the banks,

That dash'd by the passing sail,

They winter swim'd in the calm,

Leaves, and foam'd beneath the gale.

And by thy peaceful borders then

The rest man's wigwam stand,

Scattered, like the falling smoke,

Upon the earth, lonely.

And then the forest warrior tool,

The feather'd warri'r grim and grave,

Painted for war, and force with arms,

And here the dusky did the wood,

And here his children play'd,

Through the forest, like the winds,

That blow the arrow raw,

In fierce glade and dingle brown;

And here the Indian did new

With the red, the rivulet that pour'd

They're tritied to the yellow shore,

With a crimson not their own,

Imbroidered with gore!

BOOKS AND PUBLICATIONS.

COLLECTIONS OF THE LAST DAYS OF SHIRLEY AND BYRON.

BY E. J. TREV.

BOSTON: TUCKER, REED & FEARS.

Any glimpse of the closing days of Byron and Shelley

is particularly severe upon John Bull for his treatment of John Company, and treats us to a slashing review of the Palmerston administration, under the cover of an article supporting the new cabinet. Blackwood is always material, but never grows cold.

Dawson's Review

for May, contains nineteen spirited articles from some of the ablest of our writers; and near the close of the number are some very important and valuable statistics.

THE SOUTHERN LITERARY MESSENGER: Published by Macfarland, Ferguson & Co., Richmond, Va.

The Literary Messenger for May is a capital number.

The Review of Parkin's Life of Aaron Burr is carefully written by a master hand. There are several well-executed sketches, and some good poetry, though we are sorry to be obliged to object to the poetic effusions which appear every month under the title of Aretys, or Songs of the South. Some of the songs are good, but many of them are without rhyme or reason. The following, for instance, is intended to be very sentimental, but we can make nothing of it but an apostrophe to some fly: our Aretys suggests it is intended as an address to the blue-tailed fly:

Sweetest, O' sweetest fly!
Higher, where sun-laved hours

Skim along 'neath a blue sky.

We await the next issue of Aretys for an explanation of the above, and, in the meanwhile, we are in a painful state of confusion of sweetest O's and sweetest fly's.

SEOMAN'S MAGAZINE, No. 1, Raleigh, N. C. Andrew J. Stearns, editor and proprietor.

Graphic Freak.

There really seems to be no rational limit to the development of photography; it overpasses all barriers and de-scends to the minutest; what has been accomplished by it thus far may be but the forerunner of exhaustless revelations. Its microscopic phase is amongst the most recent and curious in its history. A friend hands you a strip of glass, such as is used for microscope specimens; you look at it, and see a small speck of matter which may be an eyeball of an ant or the foot of a fly. Place it under a microscope, and, presto! you have a group of beautifully-executed figures, which seem too like to be photographs, or, in some hands it seems actually to be photographs, and so robust to the dignity of art. Then there is certainly need of an artist's eye for the successful grouping and pose of portraits. But I must break off my musings about photography to introduce a new marvel which may be termed

The Scisorotype.

Here G. Schmidt, of Dusseldorf, is creating a *miracle* among the Londoners by his feats with an instrument heretofore supposed to be adapted only for the service of medical and military collectors. With a couple of long-bladed pairs of scissars he creates out of black timber, that he twists and shapes as thin as a hair, and then, by a few delicate movements, a grove of pine trees, standing out dark and sharp against the evening sky, with a couple of belated sparrows firing their last barrels at the partridges, and all this with a life, a liberty, a movement not to be seen in many pictures! or, as on a thorny, heathy, breezy eminence, a wild stag is leaping over a hurdle, and others of the herd coming on the crest, foreshortened, in the distance: or a group of hawks, such as Brett Bonheur, would not dream: or a

bunch of flowers, on which a butterfly is pausing, so tenderly, so truthfully expressed: no pretence, no Raphaelese, no photographer could be more religiously exact. In his landscape cuttings there is a life and air, a light and shade, in the tree tops, in the very grass: in the figures an expression, a freedom which all the slight of hand could not produce, if the artist's eye were not there to guide his hand.

The strangest part of the story is the fact that Herr Schmidt has never learned to draw; but ever since he was five years old he has been cutting out pictures, which may afford comfort to mothers whose children are given to "cutting up," because they may be governed in a love of the modish fraternity, who have their wantonness by an overmastering instinct of genius, which forbids them to do any harm to themselves.

But I must leave the Musings for this week to illustrate the *Religion of Positivism*.

And this is a characteristic trait of Shelley:

"Like the Indian palms, Shelley never flourished far from water." He was compelled to take up his quarters in a house he often, morning, with the instinct that guides the water-birds, fled to the nearest lake, river, or sea-shore, and only returned to roost at night. If disturbed from this, he sought out the most solitary places. Towns and crowds distract him. Even the silent and half-deserted cities of Italy, with their temples, palaces, paintings, and sculpture, could not make him stay, if there was a wood or water within his reach. At Pisa he had a river under his window, and a pine forest in the neighborhood.

But the description of the burning of the bodies of Williams and Shelley is too horribly minute to be tolerated. We do not wonder Byron could not look on when the brains of Shelley "literally soothed, bubbled, and boiled as in a cauldron." Decent regard for the stomachs of his readers, to say nothing of what was due to the man of his friend, should have kept him from penning the frightful narration in which the above line is found, and the following unjustifiable revelations of Byron's death:

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